



Dana Lang - *Ride the Vote!*

2024 San Francisco BART Board candidate questionnaire

1. What office are you running for?

BART Board, District 7

2. What is your name?

Dana Lang

3. Do you have a section on your website that details your platform? If so, please provide a link.

Priorities - Dana Lang for BART Board (danaforbart.com)

4. How often do you ride BART?

Now that I am working from home, I ride BART once a week.

5. How else do you usually get around? Please tell us when and why you use cars, Muni buses, bikes, walking, wheelchairs, or any other mode you frequently use for transportation.

I live in a very walkable neighborhood and walk to most shops. I take my car when I need to do bulk shopping.

6. If elected, what would be your top priorities for BART?

My top priorities are:

- Safety - creating a safe environment so that persons of all ages feel comfortable riding at any time of day or night. Many persons avoid riding BART, especially at night, which curtails ridership revenue.

- Cleanliness - Since the pandemic, cleanliness has become more critical a public health issue. Riders deserve a safe, healthy environment and access to clean bathrooms at the stations.
- Financial Stability - We must weather the current fiscal crisis, increase ridership revenue, and create a sustainable funding model so that costs and revenues are in balance.
- Station vitality - Create livelier station environments, including mixed use housing and retail amenities including service kiosks, popups, food trucks and farmers markets.

7. San Francisco's [Transit First Policy](#) states that within San Francisco, travel by public transit, by bicycle and on foot must be an attractive alternative to travel by private automobile. If elected, how will you use your position on the BART Board to advance the Transit First Policy?

I will encourage amenities that support walking, biking and alternative vehicles, such as vehicle charging stations for scooters and e-bikes, as well as secure areas to store them. There should also be a focus on safe walking routes that are accessible and well-lit, and bike routes that are separated from cars and walkers. Most stations are heavily concrete, so, when possible, BART should work with the City to develop mixed-use developments, community plazas, art, and green spaces near stations.

8. What role do you think law enforcement, fare enforcement, community ambassadors, and private security should play, if any, in patrolling transit? What should BART do to improve safety and the sense of safety for riders?

Police law enforcement should handle situations that involve imminent danger, and their presence may serve as a deterrent to harassment of vulnerable individuals. BART's Progressive Police Bureau, ambassadors, and crisis intervention specialists are an excellent addition to the BART Police Department; they promote appropriate responses when persons are unhoused or facing a mental crisis, so that they are appropriately assisted and not criminalized. Transit fare inspectors are a deterrent to fare evasion, but I prefer that their role is to cite evasions rather than to criminalize proof of payment issues.

I will continue to support the BART Police Civilian Review Board, where I currently serve as Vice Chair, and promote policies that create a safer transit experience for

everyone and appropriate responses and protocols from the BART Police Department. I will use my experience in public safety and transit security funding to seek resources to promote safety, such as higher fare gates, lighting, and monitored cameras at stations.

9. BART is facing a budget deficit of up to \$385m starting in 2026. How would you work towards financial stability for BART? What new revenue sources would be on (or off) the table? If new sources of funding aren't found, how should BART address the deficit?

Over the past 24 years I have worked professionally to secure hundreds of millions of dollars to help stabilize budgets at several government agencies, including SFMTA and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and others. I will seek funding from federal and state funding agencies, including Federal Transit Administration and Transit Security Administration. I can work closely with BART staff and policy makers in Washington D.C. and in Sacramento to lobby for funding needed to support BART operations and capital funding critical to train and station maintenance.

10. Since the pandemic, different Bay Area transit agencies have adopted a variety of fare policies to help recover ridership and revenue. This year, BART **raised fares** 5.5%, and will do so again at the start of next year. On the other hand, San Francisco Bay Ferry **lowered fares**, and has seen ridership grow quickly as a result. Petaluma Transit also expects to see **large increases in ridership** since using the city's general fund money to make fares free this year.

Currently, about **one-third** of BART's total revenue comes from fares.

What role should fares and fare increases play in the future of BART? Do you support raising fares to balance BART's budget and keep up with the cost of inflation, or should BART consider lowering or freezing fares to grow ridership? If you support raising fares, how should BART address equity concerns for low-income riders? If you support fare-free public transportation or fare freezes, what alternative funding sources do you support?

We must continue to support BART's participation in the Clipper Start Pilot Program which pays 50% of fares for low-income riders. The program was extended to 2025, and I think that it should remain in place in the Bay Area. While I support low-cost fares and free fares on BART in theory, I would want to work closely with the budget to better understand how to reliably fund ongoing operations while the fiscal cliff is addressed. The ferry and bus program referenced in this question have much smaller

capital and operating budgets than BART does, and fares are built into supporting BART service.

Since the pandemic, decreased ridership and revenue necessitate a hard look at how to restructure the budget and increase financial support for BART. I support seeking funding to subsidize BART Ridership for a limited time to reintroduce BART to users. Traffic is getting much worse as more people return to office work for a portion of the work week. I believe that there is a latent demand for the service and that we can get a lot of people out of their cars and back onto transit, and we can gain more fare revenue now while we try to reduce or eliminate fares in the long run.

11. How can BART work toward equitable access to public transit for all people, no matter their race, gender, abilities, neighborhood, income, or other characteristics? Do you support or oppose any existing or proposed BART policies or projects because of the effect they will have on equitable transit access?

I support supplementing fares for low-income riders and enhanced programs that assist elderly and disabled people to learn to ride and navigate the system by improving wayfinding and security within the station. BART should encourage transit ambassadors to interact with elderly and disabled riders to ensure that they are safe and able to get to their destinations. BART should encourage more community interactions that include outreach such as partnerships, community benefits fairs and group listening sessions.

When BART helps create transit-oriented development near stations, their policy is to seek a fair portion of affordable and very affordable housing units (up to 30%). A mix of housing that includes those most in need of transit and supportive services yet reflects the mix consistent with other areas of the community, creates a supportive, environmentally sustainable community available to everyone.

12. How can BART improve transfers between BART and other modes of transportation, including other transit agencies?

BART is the spine of the Bay Area's transit system, and connects riders to other forms of transportation, such as buses, ferries and airports. I would improve transfers through coordination of schedules, providing ridership information, low cost (or no cost) transfers between systems, and seek any opportunities that improve coordination of the rider experience between systems.

- Cards readers that use a universal card and create savings between systems.

- Coordinated stops, so that one system will wait for riders to transfer between system before leaving the platform or transit station.
- Promoting programs that give discounts to students and seniors.
- BART should continue to work collaboratively with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Goal 1 of the most recent Regional Transportation Plan is to develop an integrated, well-connect transit network, and BART is the spine of the network.

13. Do you support BART spending \$90 million on new hardened fare gates? Why or why not?

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14. District 7 includes the Bayview-Hunters Point and Treasure Island neighborhoods of San Francisco, as well as part of Alameda County, which can each have different needs when it comes to public transit. What do you consider the biggest similarities and differences between the transit needs of District 7's San Francisco neighborhoods and the rest of the district? If you are elected, how will you balance the transit needs of each of the neighborhoods you represent?

Both portions of District 7 in San Francisco—Treasure Island and Bay View Hunters Point—lack immediate access to the central core of the transit system and to transit points. It is important to make investments in connecting these communities reliably to BART through continuing to work closely with SFMTA on understanding what these citizens need and where they want to go. Geographic distance from BART does not mean that these residents should not be able to access being able to reach other parts of the Bay Area connected by BART. Many of these citizens could connect to employment opportunities not local to them by having a reliable connection to BART.

15. San Francisco's neighborhoods in BART District 7 are all physically distant from direct access to BART, blocked either by the Bay or by freeways, with limited transit access. How can public transit generally – and BART specifically – better serve these outer neighborhoods of San Francisco?

BART can better serve these outer neighborhoods of San Francisco by working to create shuttle services with SFMTA that are right-sized for neighborhoods in terms of demand, timing, and vehicle size in the hills communities, like in the Bay View. BART should help pay for connecting service during peak demand use of BART by these communities. All of this would require more funding for BART, and it is important to continue to seek and bring local, state, and federal funding to BART and SFMTA to serve these communities.

Note: This Ride the Vote! questionnaire is provided to the public for informational purposes only and does not imply endorsement by San Francisco Transit Riders. San Francisco Transit Riders does not endorse electoral candidates. Responses to this questionnaire are presented as submitted by the candidate unless otherwise noted.



San Francisco Transit Riders is the city's member-supported, grassroots, nonprofit advocate for excellent, affordable, and growing public transit. We believe that empowering everyday transit riders to speak up for rider-first policies will bring us the world-class transit system we need for a livable, sustainable, and accessible San Francisco.

www.sftransitriders.org

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